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CIA's No. 2 man leaves over policy disagreements Concern surrounds Inman resignation

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The resignation of Adm. Bobby Inman, the No. 2 man at the CIA, was apparently based on policy disagreements with the Reagan administration, particularly over domestic spying. The White House announced Inman's decision to resign April 21, saying only that he planned to enter private business.

While hardly the civil libertarian he has been portrayed as in some media accounts of his resignation, Inman evidently did have reservations about the revival of proposals to form a superagency cutting across jurisdictional lines of existing intelligence organizations, possibly including creation of a central records system that would be a threat to civil liberties. This scheme was first suggested in early 1981 by a Reagan transition team on intelligence, but was later scrapped. Early this year, however, Reagan gave his approval to a review of these proposals, which also include upgrading counterintelligence activities.

Inman, a former head of the National Security Agency and of Naval Intelligence and former vice director of the Defense Intelligence Agency, also expressed disagreement last year with the extent to which Reagan planned to turn the CIA loose to spy on U.S. citizens, a role normally reserved for the FBI. But although he predicted that the final version of Reagan's executive order on intelligence activities would contain no provisions for domestic CIA spying, when the document, signed in December, included greatly expanded domestic powers for the agency, he defended the new regulations and claimed they were actually quite limited.

Inman also had no qualms about the Intelligence Agents Identities Protection Act, a bill now passed by both houses of Congress which would outlaw the disclosure of names of U.S. intelligence agents, even if the information leading to the discovery was already public. Inman backs that legislation, as well as a proposal to exempt the CIA from the Freedom of Information Act.

And in January, Inman warned a meeting of scientists that if they did not voluntarily submit some of their sensitive papers to government review prior to publication, regulations on the flow of information might ensue. "Clearly we cannot allow our vital

technological lead [over the Soviet Union] to be whittled away simply because we refuse to take the time and trouble to try and strike a balance between the demands of academic freedom and the needs of national security," he told the Association of Former Intelligence Officers in March.

Inman's announced resignation caused concern among members of congressional intelligence committees. Richard Lugar (R-Ind.), a key figure in the Senate Intelligence Committee, said April 23, "We've looked to Adm. Inman. He's been our man."

Members of Congress view Inman's superior, William Casey, as a rather unprofessional agency director who earned his post through being Reagan's campaign manager rather than through any particular expertise in the field of intelligence. This sentiment was reinforced last year when Casey's crony Max Hugel, whom the CIA director had named deputy director for operations, was forced to resign over reports of questionable stock market dealings. Casey himself came under investigation at the time and came through with a not-too-enthusiastic "not unfit" to serve verdict from the Senate intelligence panel.

Moves to force Casey's departure as well in that period were quashed by reports from the White House that not only would Inman not succeed Casey, but the admiral might be fired too.

Senate Intelligence Committee chairman Barry Goldwater (R-Ariz.) said Casey was "a fine man, ... a real spy when he was with the Office of Strategic Services [the World War 2 predecessor of the CIA], a real guy with a dagger. But we do it differently now and he is not a pro." Lugar said the CIA encompassed "complexities that would take more years to understand than Casey will be alive."

Inman himself reportedly thought Casey overly fond of adventurous but ill-advised CIA operations abroad. Sen. Joseph Biden Jr. (D-Del.) noted, "Without [Inman] the intelligence agencies may be given license to try all kinds of questionable things here and abroad." But given Inman's record of backing for Reagan's proposals for the intelligence community, including the vastly increased CIA budget, it is unlikely that the admiral would have served as much of a



Bobby Ray Inman.

check on such activities.

On April 26, in a move that is expected to reassure Congress, Reagan named John McMahon as Inman's probable successor. Currently the No. 3 man in the CIA and former head of its covert operations division, McMahon has put in 31 years at the agency.